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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0585  
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA PRIORITY 0060  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 0113

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 000561

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: IRAQ-TURKEY-U.S. TRILATERAL DIALOGUE WORKING GROUP  
AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS DISCUSSES ERBIL LIAISON OFFICE

REF: BAGHDAD 321

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Classified By: POLMIL Minister Counselor Michael H. Corbin  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

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SUMMARY  
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11. (C) The second Sub-Committee meeting (SC) (of the Iraq-Turkey-U.S. Trilateral Security Dialogue took place February 26, a week after the latest Working Group (WG) meeting held on February 19 when Iraq provided to Turkey for the first time, intelligence on the PKK. At the SC, the GoI presented greater detail on the projected budget of the planned-for Erbil Liaison office. At the earlier Working Group meeting, Iraq unexpectedly presented the U.S. with a verbal request for the USG to fund some, if not all, of the two million dollar start-up budget for the office. U.S. delegation lead RDML Little told the SC that the two million dollar figure seemed inflated and requested a detailed breakdown of the budget. In response to Iraq's request at the last WG, the GoT said it would provide a list of 244 PKK members with pending arrest warrants in Turkey which the GoI could use as a basis for arrest and with a separate list of suspected PKK terrorists (sans warrants) that the GoI will place under observation and report movement details to the GoT. At the SC meeting, the GoT declared that it would provide the requested information to the GoI through its defense attach. End Summary.

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TRILATERAL PROGRESS - PACED AND DELIBERATE  
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12. (C) At the outset of the second Sub-Committee meeting held at the one star level), Iraqi delegation lead General Tarik al Baldawi commented on Turkey's role as one of the top countries contributing to the reconstruction of Iraq and on the steadily improving relationship between Iraq and Turkey - noting the PKK as an obstacle to the security of both countries requiring action. On behalf of the U.S. delegation, Rear Admiral Little highlighted the need for the SC to accomplish several things, including the need for progress on the Erbil Liaison office. Noting that the concept of the office had already appeared in the press, Admiral Little urged, "If we say we are going to do something, we should do it." He said, to date, progress had been 'paced and deliberate' but was certain tangible results were possible in advance of the next ministerial level meeting. At the February 19 meeting, Iraq made the first provision of intelligence to Turkey since the re-inception of the Trilateral Security Dialogue in November of 2008, when Iraq provided details of PKK leadership, outlined some areas of PKK operations in northern Iraq, and provided the names

and passport data of suspected PKK that were refused entry into Iraq.

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ESTABLISHING THE ERBIL LIAISON OFFICE  
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¶3. (C) In his summary of the minutes from WG meetings since the last SC meeting, Committee Secretary Hamid Rashid said that the Committee agreed to the opening of the Erbil office and KRG rep Gen. Delshad Najib had been tasked to determine what would be needed to open the office. He stated that the GoI participants of the SC had met previously and were prepared to name their representatives to the Erbil office. On the subject of the GoT's request to participate in staffing the office, Rashid said the request did not fall within the purview of the SC and would need to be determined within the purview of the SC and would need to be determined at the ministerial level. (NOTE: GoI reps have previously told us that Turkish participation in the KRG-based office is politically sensitive and would need to be determined as a policy matter. It was unclear if ministerial referred to the upcoming Trilateral Ministerial meeting or the Iraqi Council of Ministers. End note.) Until the office is opened, the GoI began operating a cell working in the KRG to provide the committee with intelligence about the PKK. The GoI also created a database on PKK leadership structure and PKK activities in Anatolia, northern Iraq and Iran. The information will be updated regularly and shared "once it is confirmed."

¶4. (C) All sides expressed positive expectations for the Liaison Office planned for Erbil. The Iraqis admitted to funding challenges, since the Office is not in its current budget. Both BG Barutcu and RDML Little stated support for the Office. Monetary support from the GOT will depend upon

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the GOT receiving permission from the GoI to place liaison officers in the office. RDML Little emphasized that we need to see a detailed budget proposal before any further discussion about funding could move forward. He said the two million dollar figure provided at the February 19 WG seemed high and would need to be looked at closely. Undersecretary Baldawi offered a figure of 6.4 million Iraqi Dinar (ID) per month to lease the facility and 90 million ID as operational sustainment costs.

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EFFORTS TO ISOLATE THE PKK  
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¶5. (S) In response to a request from the GoT for Iraq to outline efforts made to isolate the PKK, BG Baldawi commented on the first item of intelligence shared by the GoI with the GoT under the aegis of the Trilateral Security Dialogue, which took place at the last WG meeting on February 19. The GoI was pleased that its information about the Syrian national who heads PKK military operations Feynman Hussein (code named Dr. Bahoz Erdal) matched information the GoT possessed on the subject. He then discussed additional names of PKK leaders provided by Iraq, including the PKK's public relations expert, the head of party in Europe, the head of all Kurdish organizations, and others. The intelligence shared, he said, detailed PKK locations, the number of armed members, PKK weaponry, financing, movements and medical care. (Note: The Turkish side restrained themselves as to the extremely basic nature of the intelligence provided by Iraq and did not correct Baldawi when he showed a complete lack of understanding as to the difference between PKK organizations. End Note.)

¶6. (S) Baldawi told delegates that Minister of State for National Security Affairs Waeili gave instructions for the PKK to be isolated and prevented from operating on Iraqi soil. The GoI's representatives to the Erbil Office will

include and would include two representatives each from the M2, MoI/CID, MoI/DBE, MSNSA, and the IIS, as well as some support personnel. A representative from MSNSA will lead the Iraqi liaison team. He stated that the intended secure communications systems were the I2N or ciphered ISGN systems and, perhaps, Thuraya cell phones. He reiterated the request presented at the last WG for U.S. assistance in obtaining these communications systems.

¶17. (S) Baldawi explained that in a recent meeting with MoD, MoI, MoH, NSC Advisor, NIS, the General Secretary of the Cabinet and the KRG representative, a unanimous decision was reached to treat the PKK as a terrorist organization and to take all steps to combat it, including closing any offices determined to be fronts for the PKK and denying PKK leaders movement along the border or injured PKK fighters from seeking medical care in Iraq. He said "great strides" had already been made against the PCDK - the PKK's political front organization. He also raised the issue of Waeili's efforts to prevent the Makhmour Refugee Camp from serving as a front for the PKK, where he said PKK elements were residing. The GoI is aware of the humanitarian problems presented by the almost twelve thousand persons living at Makhmour. Minister Waeili intends to present his views on Makhmour at the next ministerial level meeting.

¶18. (S) Head of the Turkish delegation, BG Abdullah Barutcu said the Turks brought with them the information requested Qsaid the Turks brought with them the information requested by the GoI at the previous WG about persons with arrest warrants pending against them in Turkey as well as the names of suspected PKK members believed to be in Iraq. The information to be provided by the GoT's Defense Attach in Baghdad, contained 244 names of persons with warrants and a compact disc containing information about the PCDK.

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NEXT MEETING  
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¶19. (C) At the conclusion of the SC meeting, the GoI pressed for the next Ministerial meeting to take place in mid-March. Both U.S. and Turkish delegates expressed hesitation and agreed the issue will be settled at the next WG meeting to be held on March 12.

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COMMENT  
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¶10. (C) According to sensitive reporting from Embassy Ankara, KRG reps told Turkish Special Envoy to Iraq Murat Ozcelik

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when he visited the region in early February that they saw the GoI's efforts to establish the Erbil liaison office as an effort to establish a "beachhead" in the north. As a result, the KRG wanted Turkey to step back from its full support of the office. The Iraqi effort to sideline Turkish involvement in the office and a concomitant request for funding by the U.S. to the tune of two million dollars dampens expectations that the concept will come to fruition in the near future. Nonetheless, both the GoI and the GoT continued to support the idea at this SC meeting and the Turkish side remained silent about the obvious lack of progress in gaining tangible, new cooperation in this forum.

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